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ON PAGE B-11

WASHINGTON TIMES

6 June 1983

SOCIETY / Betty Beale

Ardeshir Zahedi, America's greatest host while posted here as the shah of Iran's ambassador, blew into town for two days, saw friends at the State Department and in the Senate, visited his former social secretary Jaleh Yazdan-Panah of the prominent Iranian family, who lies seriously ill at Georgetown University Hospital, and attended the OSS dinner at the Washington Hilton where former CIA director and ambassador to Iran Richard Helms was honored with the Bill

Donovan Award.

Zahedi, looking even more full of health and vitality than on his last visit, also attended Henry Kissinger's birthday bash in New York. At the OSS dinner he was the guest of noted oilman John Shaheen. We all remember Shaheen's efforts to start a newspaper in the Big Apple, the New York Press, and the divine eight-day voyage to Bermuda he threw aboard the Queen Elizabeth 2 to publicize the venture, as well as that other time he chartered the QE2 to take 1,200 friends to the dedication of his oil refinery in Newfoundland. Those were the glamorous days.

Honoree Helms spoke for only 10 minutes at that dinner, but devoted all that time to America's need for in-depth institutes to study and understand Iranian, Soviet, etc., leaders and methods. "It's open knowledge in our government that we do not know how the Saudi royal family arrives at its decisions. The same applies to the Russian leadership," he said.